

05/27/2014

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Updates from the MT
Laboratory Services

Bureau

800-821-7284

www.lab.hhs.mt.gov



Announcing the new Montana CLIA Surveyor

Joyce Shepard, PhD, MLS (ASCP) has recently been hired as the Montana CLIA surveyor. Dr. Shepard comes to Montana DPHHS from Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Hamilton, MT. She received her Ph.D. from Montana State University and her MLS degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Shepard is busy learning the CLIA inspection system, and has already performed some inspections, so you may already know her. Dr. Shepard can be reached by calling 406-444-2099 or by writing to mtssad@mt.gov or jshepard@mt.gov. She may be on the road doing inspections, but she will respond as soon as she can.



MERS in the United States

The first U.S. imported case of MERS was confirmed in early May in a healthcare worker traveling from Saudi Arabia to Indiana. Shortly after, a second unrelated U.S. imported case of MERS was confirmed in a healthcare worker, traveling from Saudi Arabia to Florida. On May 16, 2014, an Illinois resident who had contact with the first case of MERS in the U.S. tested positive for MERS-CoV antibodies. The man remains in good health.

The MERS situation in the U.S. represents a very low risk to the general public in this country. However, CDC and other public health partners continue to investigate and respond to the changing situation to prevent the spread of MERS-CoV in the U.S. Check out the [CDC website](http://www.cdc.gov) for the most recent information on MERS.

U.S. Public Health Laboratories have responded quickly to detect the first U.S. cases of MERS-CoV in Indiana and Florida. Public health laboratories across the country, including the MTPHL, are prepared and ready to test for the virus.

There are two laboratory tests to detect infection with MERS-CoV, a serology test performed at CDC, and a MERS-CoV real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (real-time RT-PCR) assay, performed at the MTPHL.

If a Montana healthcare provider suspects MERS-CoV infection in a patient, they should contact their local public health agency. If unable to reach local public health, contact the Montana Department of Health (DPHHS) Communicable Disease Epidemiology section at (406) 444-0273. If the patient meets the CDC definition of a [Patient Under Investigation](#), appropriate specimens should be forwarded to the MTPHL. To increase the likelihood of detecting infection, CDC recommends collecting multiple specimens from different sites at different times after symptom onset, if possible. You can review the [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Patients Under Investigation \(PUIs\) for MERS-CoV](#). CDC has also provided [Interim Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines for Handling and Processing Specimens Associated with MERS-CoV](#). Please feel free to contact the MTPHL with any questions you may have regarding laboratory safety or testing at 800-821-7284.



Montana Communicable Disease Weekly Update

Release date: 5/23/2014

DISEASE INFORMATION

Summary – MMWR Week 20 - Ending 5/17/2014 Preliminary disease reports received at DPHHS during the reporting period May 11–17, 2014 included the following:

- **Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** Influenza hospitalization (3), Pertussis (7)
- **Invasive Diseases:** *Haemophilus influenza* (1)
- **Enteric Diseases:** Campylobacteriosis (2), Cryptosporidiosis (3), Giardiasis (2), Salmonellosis (4), Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* [STEC] (1)
- **Hepatitis:** Hepatitis A (1)
- **HIV Disease**:** (0)
- **Vector-borne Diseases:** (0)
- **Animal Rabies:** (0)
- **Travel Related Conditions:** Coccidioidomycosis (1)

* Weekly updated Montana Influenza Summary is included as link in the Influenza section of this update.

** A case is included if a new confirmatory test or report was received by DPHHS. Cases include both persons who were newly diagnosed and persons newly reported in Montana who may have been diagnosed in another state or country.

NOTE: The attached reports have multiple pages reflecting the following information: (1) cases for the past reporting week; (2) communicable diseases YTD; (3) clusters and outbreaks; and (4) a quarterly HIV/STD summary.

HOT TOPICS

***E Coli* 0121 (raw sprouts) Outbreak – Health Alert Advisory:** At present, there are no cases in Montana linked to potentially contaminated raw clover sprouts from Idaho. There are presently 10 confirmed cases in Washington and Idaho per last communications. DPHHS, is asking providers to increase their level of suspicion regarding this and to test accordingly. And we are asking consumers to be cautious when eating raw clover sprouts. A health alert network message (attached) has gone out with recommendations for providers and health departments. A press release will also be sent out today.

More information can be found at the CDC Update site <http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2014/O121-05-14/index.html>

Rabies Communications: It's that time of year again: Hantavirus, ticks (and they are out everywhere), and now Rabies. Both the animals and humans are coming out and running into one another so exposures are occurring and calls are coming in. Our press release this week received some coverage <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/newsevents/newsreleases2014/may/rabies.shtml> and our resources are available for your use on our SharePoint site.

Recreational water illness and injury (RWII) prevention week is this week: *Grade School Kids Poster Contest!!! Through End Of May* Please check out our new website about our campaign:

www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/rwii Everything you need to know about RWII and the contest is on our site or linked to that site. Links to the site will be sent to elementary schools in Montana, inviting them to participate in this year's contest! Press Release and web information will be distributed on Monday.

We are asking all elementary school children to learn about RWII in their class and color a poster to show what they learned. These posters will be entered into a contest and the best posters not only win a prize, but will be printed and distributed to pools throughout Montana as part of the second phase of the campaign in July. ***Talk to your schools and teachers about how they can participate during the last few weeks of school before they go out and visit water recreation facilities.***

2013-2014 Influenza Season: (NEW FLU SUMMARY AVAILABLE): *Don't stop reporting... Please continue to report your aggregate case counts in MIDIS through the end of the season (June 1) -- only a few weeks away.* The current [FluView](#) report indicates that seasonal influenza activity is low and declining across most of the country, though flu viruses continue to circulate and cause illness in the United States. The most recent issue of the Montana Influenza Summary is available at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/influenza/influenzaactivity.shtml>

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV): A final report on RSV will be provided in the second week of June. The most recent report can be found at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/rsv/>

INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Summer Institute Registration Page Now Open: The 2014 DPHHS Summer Institute is July 14 – 18 in Billings at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The conference is intended for the professional public health workforce of Montana from tribal, county, and city public health agencies. Sanitarians, DPHHS employees, and college students studying public health, and interested clinicians might also attend for training and professional development. The sessions this year involve immunizations, epidemiology, public health emergency preparedness, food safety, public health law, and public health management. There are continuing education credits available for the sessions. For details on sessions, fees, and registration, visit <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/mphti/>.

OTHER TIMELY RESOURCES

Pertussis: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cdepi/index.shtml>

Hantavirus: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cdepi/index.shtml>

Ticks: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/ticks/index.shtml>

24/7 AVAILABILITY

The Communicable Disease Epidemiology (CDEpi) Program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, to assist local health jurisdictions. Local providers should call, including after normal business hours, their local health jurisdiction. The CDEpi 24-hour line is available as a back-up to the local health jurisdiction's 24-hour line. If you need CDEpi assistance, please call 406.444.0273. Phone calls to this number outside of normal business hours will be answered by the answering service. The answering service will immediately forward the message to CDEpi, and we will respond as quickly as possible.

Local health jurisdictions, please ensure that your local providers have your 24/7/365 contact information. And please inform CDEpi or the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program of updates to your required 24/7 contact information.

This update is produced by the Montana Communicable Disease Epidemiology Program. Questions regarding its content should be directed to 406.444.0273 (24/7/365). For more information: <http://cdepi.hhs.mt.gov>